

MISSOURI VETERANS COMMISSION



Annual Report

Fiscal Year 1993

July 1, 1992 – June 30, 1993



STATE OF MISSOURI

Mel Carnahan
Governor



DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY

Terry L. Knowles
Director

MISSOURI VETERANS COMMISSION

Robert R. Buckner
Executive Director

William V. Haynes
Director of Admin./Services

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Paul D. Gray
Vice-Chairman

Charles Wilcox
Member

Deborah I. Halter
Member

James Whitfield
Member

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Director's Comments

During the past fiscal year, there have been significant developments in the scope and quality of the state's programs for veterans as administered by the Missouri Veterans Commission under the authority of Chapter 42, RSMo.

Of great concern to veterans throughout the state was state funding for improvements to the old buildings comprising the Missouri Veterans Home at St. James. The legislature appropriated \$1,900,000 this year, and plans to provide another \$1,900,000 next year, to build a completely new facility on the St. James campus. The VA will provide approximately \$7,000,000 (65%) for a total project cost of approximately \$10,800,000. Construction is expected to begin in the fall of 1994.

Also, construction has been completed on the new 200-bed facility in Bellefontaine Neighbors (North St. Louis). Admissions began in November 1993.

Although five new employees were requested for our Service to Veterans Program--MAVO had urged the addition of twelve--only one was provided. The one additional Service officer will be located in the new veterans home at St. Louis. The Missouri Veterans Commission is concerned that more Service Officers are needed statewide. Some reasons for this concern are the aging veteran population, the closing of military bases, the return of Desert Storm veterans, and the increasing complexity in VA benefits.

In the upcoming year, the Commission must focus efforts for improvement on additional personnel. The priority has two components:

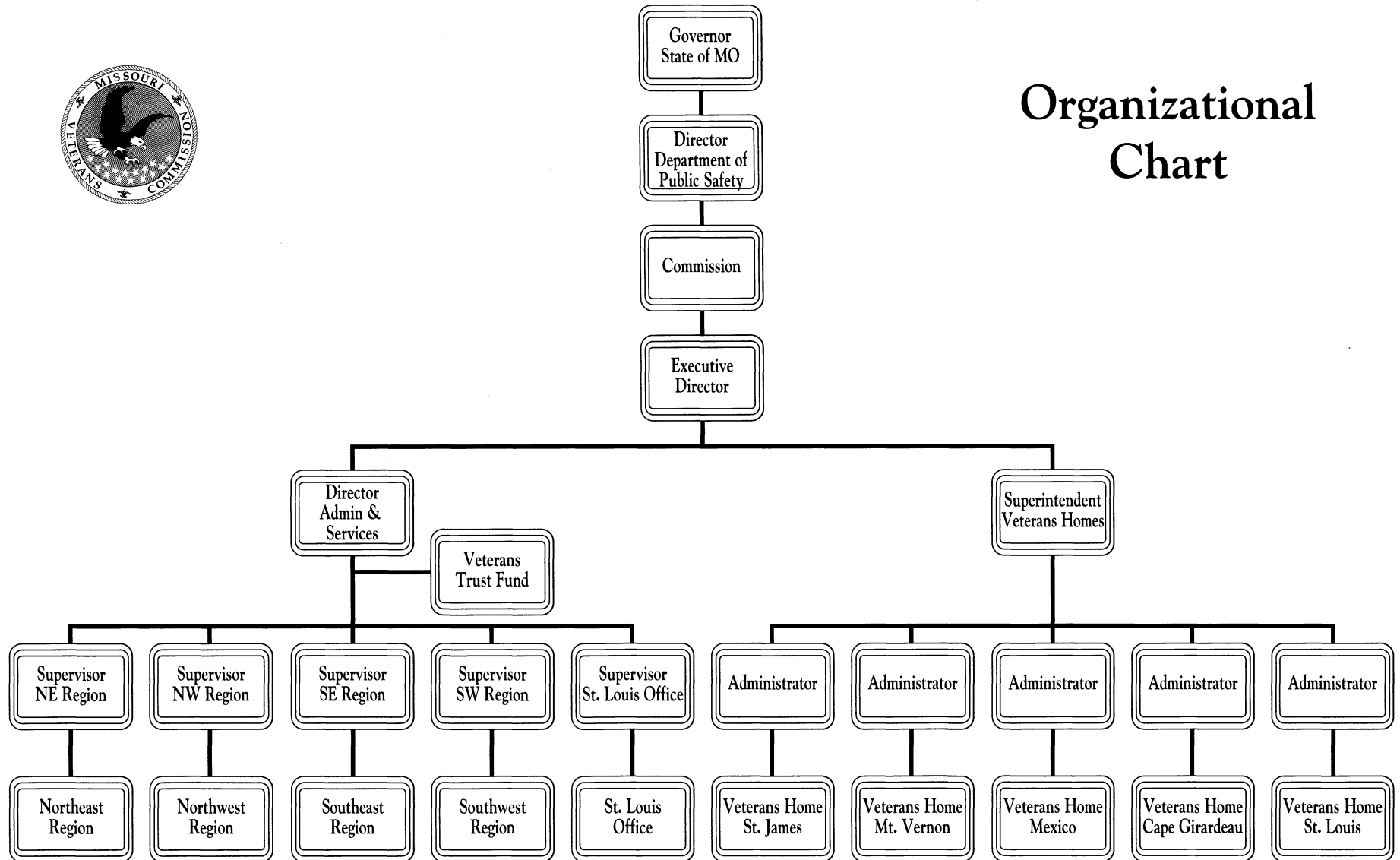
- 1) Additional Veterans Service Officers-necessary because of increasing workload,*
- 2) Additional Central Office resource staff-necessary because of expansion of Veterans Homes Programs.*

Robert R. Buckner

MISSOURI VETERANS COMMISSION



Organizational Chart





BRIEF HISTORY AND INTRODUCTION

The State of Missouri has been helping its veterans, their dependents and survivors since 1931, in securing benefits to which they are entitled under state and federal laws, and has also made provision for long term nursing care for its aging veterans. The agency has operated under several titles. Originally named the "Office of the State Service Officer" (1931), the agency was renamed as the "Office of the Director of Veterans Affairs" (1963) and became the present Missouri Veterans Commission with the passing of House Bill 850 in 1989. The Commission is governed as a state agency by Chapter 42, RSMo., (Supplemental 1989). A description of Commission structure and operation are included in the Mission Statement.

The Missouri Veterans Commission's first Annual Report, published and widely-distributed for FY 1992, was well received. The resulting effect of the report is a better understanding of the purpose, accounting and accomplishments of the Commission. Many requests for more information and/or assistance, and indications of support have been received because of the first Annual Report. Members of the legislature, who appropriate funding for veterans programs, were informed in greater detail of Commission functions and how they are accomplished. The need for veterans services was acutely displayed and hopefully recognized and appreciated.

The aim of this year's Annual Report is the same as the first. To inform, reiterate the need, and present an accounting of the Missouri Veterans Commission's work on behalf of Missouri's deserving veterans.



MISSION STATEMENT

The Missouri Veterans Commission was established on August 28, 1989, and Chapter 42, RSMo. (Supplemental, 1989) governs its operation as a state agency. The Commission is vested with the responsibility to provide the Veterans of Missouri with programs and services funded by the state and federal governments as well as private and corporate contributions.

The Commission is composed of five veterans appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the Senate. The Commission directs all state efforts to provide for the needs of veterans, their dependents and survivors. These needs are met through two major programs: Service to Veterans and the Missouri Veterans Homes. The Commission appoints an Executive Director who implements policies and is responsible for the statewide management of veterans programs.

The Service to Veterans program provides essential services to the veterans of the state. Acting as the veterans' representative, the Veterans Service Officers and their staffs provide counseling and assistance by presenting and prosecuting claims on behalf of the veterans and their dependents or survivors. These claims may include compensation, education, pensions, insurance, hospitalization and rehabilitation. Services also include assistance for the veterans in any matter which requires coordination and cooperation with local, state and federal agencies.

The Missouri Veterans Homes provide the highest possible level of quality nursing care to Missouri's veterans. Their objective is to rehabilitate to the maximum attainable level of independent functioning by utilizing all necessary governmental and community services and therapies, and to provide a comfortable, safe, sanitary environment conducive to personal happiness. A further goal is to make available for residents social and cultural activities of personal interest designed to foster feelings of dignity and self-respect.

The Commission also provides direction for the Veterans Trust Fund. This is a means whereby Missourians can financially contribute to the Commission, so it can continue to provide quality programs and services to the veterans of the state.

The Missouri Veterans Commission represents all Missouri veterans and is charged with meeting the needs and defending the entitlements of those who have served their country with honor and distinction.

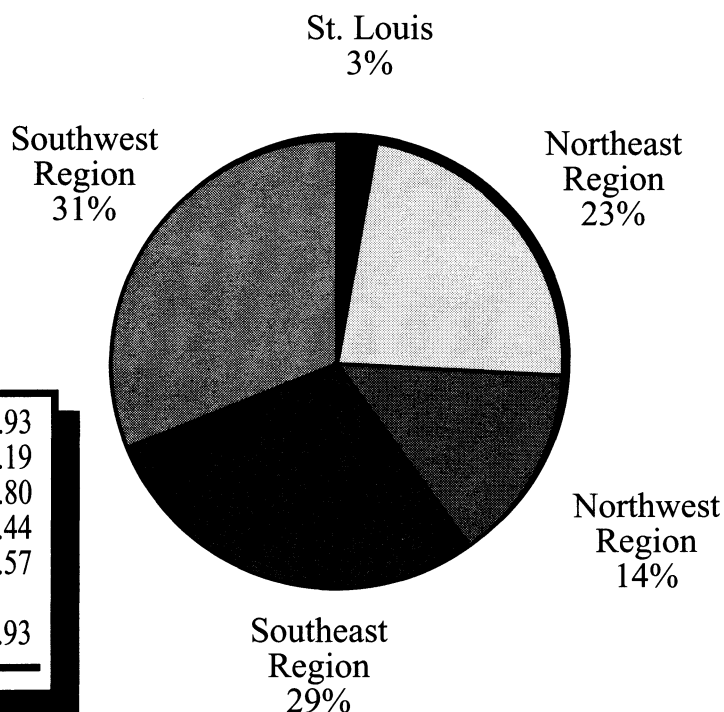


SERVICES TO VETERANS PROGRAM

Through this program, the Commission provides a network of Veterans Service Officers throughout the state. These officers and assistants are dedicated to counsel and assist veterans in filing claims for benefits from the Department of Veterans Affairs. All residents who have had honorable military service, their dependents and survivors are eligible for assistance. Thirty-eight (38) Veterans Service personnel were responsible in Fiscal Year 1993, for obtaining over \$58,000,000 in federal benefits for veterans, their dependents and survivors. (See following chart of Veteran Benefits Awarded - FY'93)

Veteran Benefits Awarded - FY '93

AWARDS
by
Region



| | |
|-----------|-----------------|
| NE Region | \$13,339,413.93 |
| NW Region | 8,094,951.19 |
| SE Region | 16,765,785.80 |
| SW Region | 18,024,027.44 |
| St. Louis | 2,024,293.57 |

| | |
|--------------|-----------------|
| Total Awards | \$58,248,471.93 |
|--------------|-----------------|

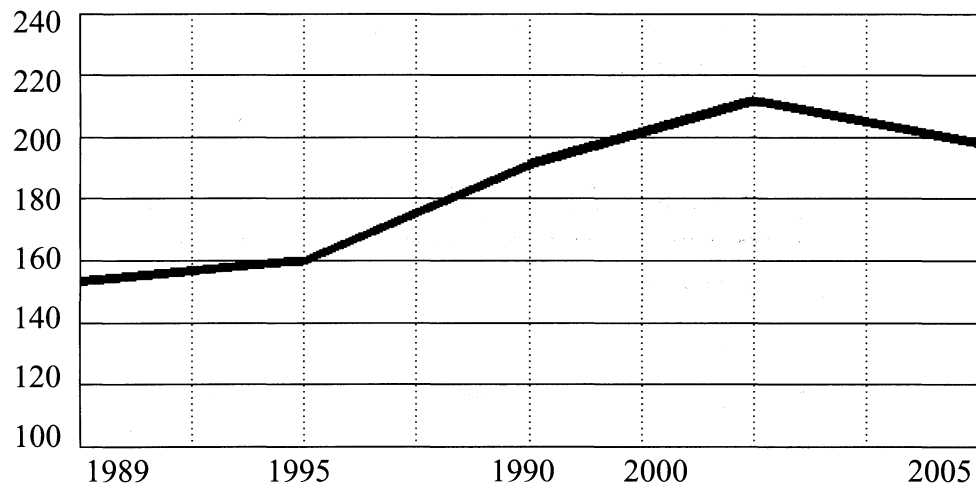


The following charts show the current disparity between the numbers of aging veterans who are in need of our services, and the continuing decline in personnel to provide those services.

MISSOURI VETERANS

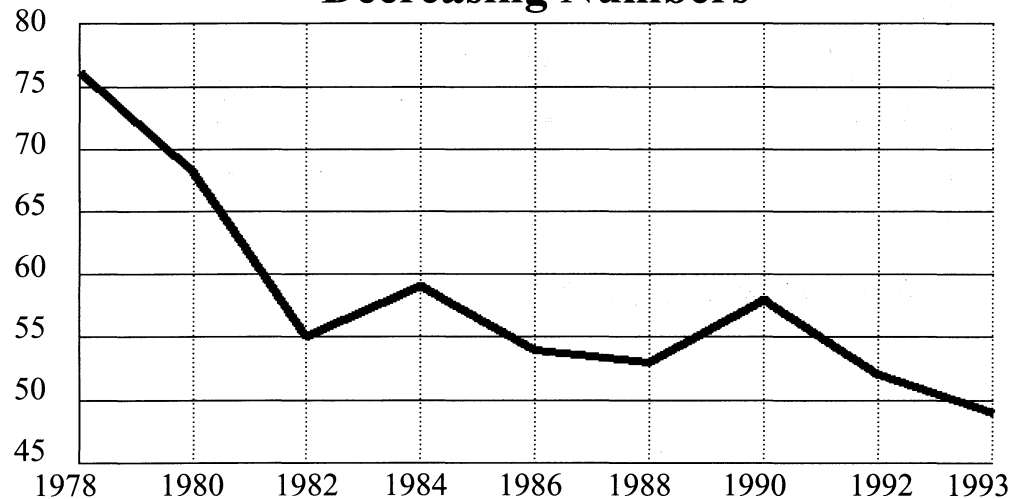
Thousands

Age 65 and Over



SERVICE TO VETERANS PERSONNEL

Decreasing Numbers

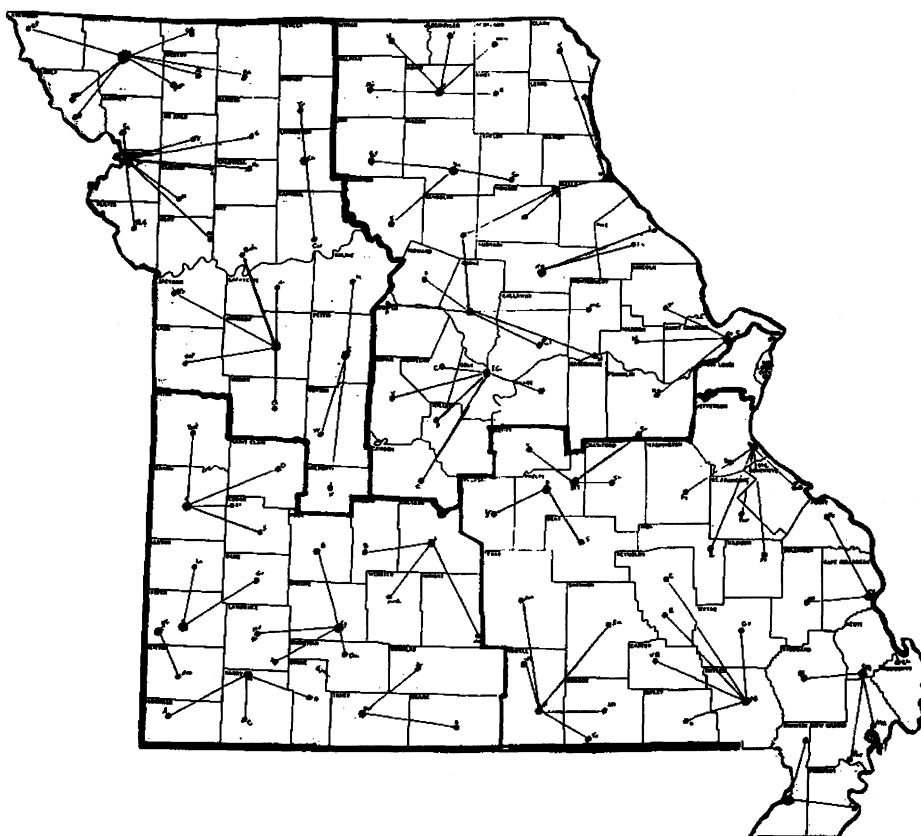




As evidenced by the benefits awarded as income for Missouri veterans last year, Service Officers work tirelessly until they are sure that all benefits for which a client is eligible have been secured. Without the knowledge, training, diligence and caring of these VSOs and VSAs, many benefits would never reach the veterans who deserve them.

Additionally, State Service Officers make themselves available to groups interested in veterans benefits. They answer questions, provide instruction, or give short presentations about the benefits of having served in the U.S. military. The promotional video recently produced by the Commission, and funded through the Veterans Trust Fund, will be useful in making such presentations to the public.

Veterans Service Officer Home Offices and Satellite Locations throughout the State





MISSOURI VETERANS COMMISSION

Services Rendered

FY '93

| | |
|------------------------------------|--------|
| <i>Contacts</i> | 88,148 |
| <i>Letters Written</i> | 12,348 |
| <i>Forms Completed</i> | 75,510 |
| <i>Claims Filed</i> | 7,758 |
| <i>Documents Procured</i> | 14,366 |
| <i>Documents Transmitted</i> | 28,848 |

Definition of Terms:

| | |
|-------------------------------|---|
| <i>Contacts:</i> | Requests for service or information (in person, by telephone, or by letter) |
| <i>Letters Written:</i> | Outgoing correspondence originating in the Commission on behalf of claimant in developing their claims. |
| <i>Forms Completed:</i> | Forms completed by the Service to Veterans Program to assist veterans and dependents with VA benefits. |
| <i>Documents Procured:</i> | Documents obtained in support of a claim. |
| <i>Documents Transmitted:</i> | Documents transmitted in support of a claim. |



VETERANS HOMES PROGRAMS

As set forth in the Mission Statement, the aim of our five Missouri Veterans Homes is to provide the highest possible level of quality skilled care to Missouri's veterans. Any veteran who is in need of nursing care may seek admission to a veterans home by filing an application with the home of his or her choice. Operations funding is accomplished through a combination of state general revenue, federal funding through a Department of Veterans Affairs per diem grant program, and charges to the veteran, based on the individual's ability to pay.

Missouri Veterans Homes are inspected twice annually by the Department of Veterans Affairs for the continuance of per diem payments. Policies for health care administration are centrally managed by the Commission's Executive Director. Therapeutic modalities of physical, psychosocial and rehabilitative origin are provided in each facility.

The five Missouri Veterans Homes are located at **St. James, Mount Vernon, Mexico, Cape Girardeau, and St. Louis**.

St. James - As previously mentioned in the Executive Summary and Priorities, funding has been appropriated for the construction of a new, 150-bed facility on the present campus. St. James is the oldest and original state veterans home, established in 1896, with the state assuming responsibility the following year. The historic chapel on the site will be retained from the original buildings on the 50-acre campus.

Mount Vernon - This home opened in May 1983, and is located in a wing of the Missouri Rehabilitation Center. Skilled nursing care for 106 veterans in the southwest area of the state is provided here.

Mexico - The state's third veterans nursing home, this 150-bed facility was opened in 1985 and serves the north-central area of the state. The home features an open mall containing dining rooms, lounges, recreation and therapy areas, a library, a general store, and medical and administrative offices.

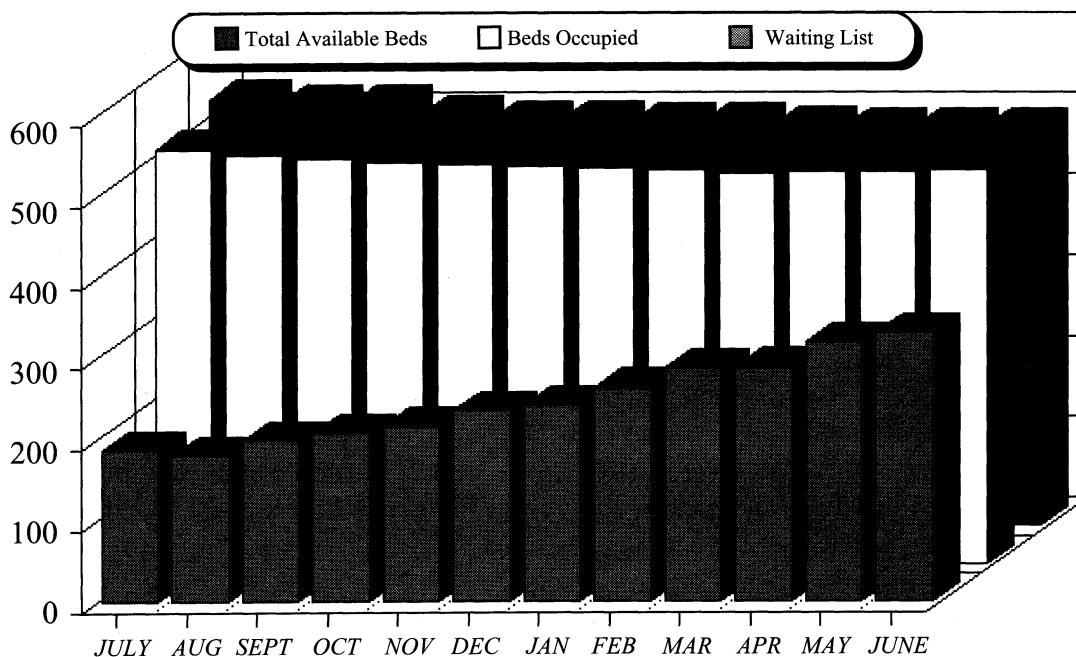
Cape Girardeau - This 150-bed skilled nursing facility opened in 1989 as the state's fourth veterans home. It is designed to resemble a small village, with three 50-bed living units surrounding a central administration building. This facility serves the veterans in the southeast part of the state.

St. Louis - The newest Missouri Veterans Home, located in Bellefontaine Neighbors, off Highways I-270 and 367 in St. Louis County, began admitting residents in November 1993. This state-of-the-art, 200-bed, skilled nursing care veterans home is the fifth home opened and operated by the Missouri Veterans Commission.



The following chart indicates that the waiting lists for admittance to our veterans homes are growing much more rapidly than turnover occurs within the facilities.

State Homes Program Census Report FY 93 Composite



These waiting list numbers will be alleviated to some degree in the upcoming year as 100 new beds are opened in St. Louis, but will, in probability, continue to occur because there are more and more veterans interested in the services we provide. The fact that veterans homes are much more cost effective for veterans and their families than other services available to them is another important factor in the size of the waiting lists.



STATE HOMES PROGRAM GOALS PROGRAM REVIEW

A management by goal review program was implemented in each facility during FY 93. Facility administrators were responsible for goal programs in five areas: clinical management, fiscal management, human resources, administration, and environmental management. Goals were to include areas of program evaluation, innovation, market share, and image. Each administrator targeted at least one area for intensive review and study. Accomplishments include:

St. James

Individualized management skill development program was devised for each department head.

Cape Girardeau

Departmental budgets were developed as tested against national norms.

Mexico

Building interior design and furnishings were evaluated with plans for module redecoration and furniture replacement completed. This work will occur following HVAC project completion.

Mt. Vernon

Facility space program was evaluated with arrangements completed with MRC to secure additional space on the ground floor. This space accommodated a move of the business office, addition of six resident beds, and remodeling of activity department space.

Statewide Goals Program Accomplishments

Implementation of fiscal management tracking system.

63% decrease in resident account outstanding balances.

Implementation of low census budget withholding plan.

Computerization of medical records, accounts payable, accounts receivable, and inventory management. (Target completion date statewide June 1994)

Standardized administrative, infection control, exposure control, and employee safety and health manuals developed via roundtable consensus approach.

Preventive maintenance programs written and implemented specific to each facility.



MISSOURI VETERANS' COMMISSION VETERANS' HOMES VOLUNTEER SERVICES

FY '93 Annual Report

INDIVIDUAL VOLUNTEERS

| | | |
|-----------------------------|-----------------|--------------|
| Total Individual Volunteers | <u>2,222</u> | |
| Total Number of Hours | <u>30,071.5</u> | |
| Average Hrs. per Individual | | <u>13.53</u> |

GROUP VOLUNTEERS

| | | |
|-----------------------------|---------------|-------------|
| Total Group Volunteers | <u>4,980</u> | |
| Total Number of Hours | <u>30,560</u> | |
| Average Hrs. per Individual | | <u>6.14</u> |

COMMUNITY SERVICE VOLUNTEERS

| | | |
|-----------------------------|--------------|--------------|
| Total Community Volunteers | <u>129</u> | |
| Total Number of Hours | <u>3,723</u> | |
| Average Hrs. per Individual | | <u>28.86</u> |

OVERALL TOTAL VOLUNTEERS

7,331

TOTAL HOURS DONATED

64,354.5 x 4.25 = \$273,506.63
(min.wage)

AVERAGE HRS. PER INDIVIDUAL

8.78

MONETARY DONATIONS

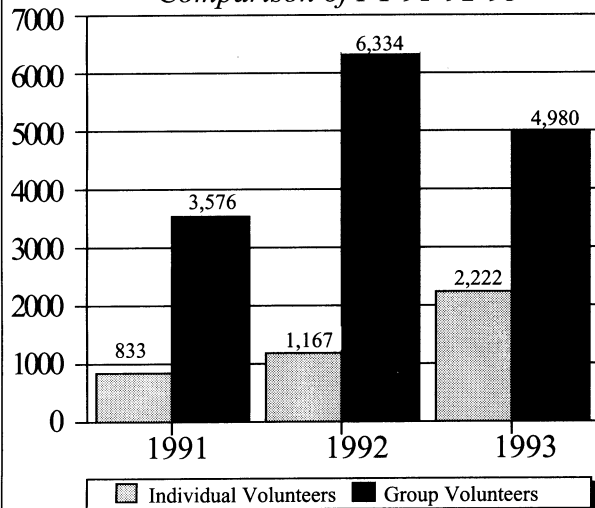
| | |
|----------------------------|------------------|
| Total Monetary Donations | \$138,999.00 |
| Total Other Materials (\$) | <u>86,532.00</u> |

GRAND TOTAL

\$225,531.00

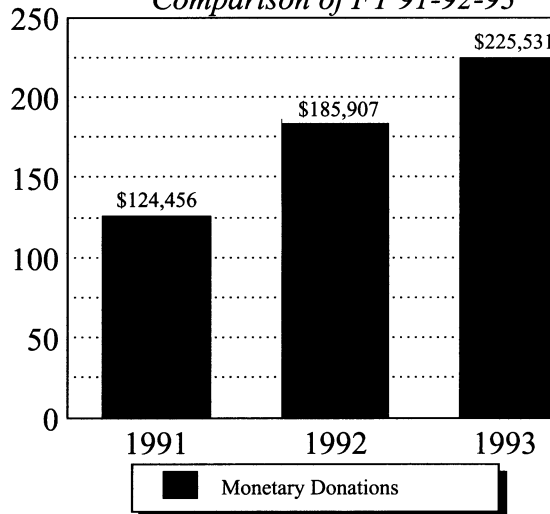
Volunteer Numbers

Comparison of FY 91-92-93



Monetary Donations

Comparison of FY 91-92-93





VETERANS TRUST FUND

As can be seen on the accompanying Veterans Trust Fund Revenue and Expenditure Summary, there was a total of \$94,964.18 that flowed into the fund during the FY 1993 fiscal year. The Department of Revenue expended \$38,345.05 for administration of the fund, and the Veterans Commission expended \$37,874.77 on authorized programs, for a sum of \$76,219.82 total expenditures out of the Trust Fund.

The passage in the 87th General Assembly of House Bill 592, and its subsequent signing by Governor Mel Carnahan, effectively limits the Department of Revenue's ability to utilize Veterans Trust Fund money to a maximum of 5% of the previous year's revenues. Assuming similar contributions to the Trust Fund during the next fiscal year, this legislation will mean some \$34,000 additional funds available for veterans programs.

Veterans Commission expenditures of Trust Fund monies for FY '93 were authorized under two budget appropriation items. Item #1 consisted of \$30,000 for professional development at Missouri Veterans Homes to enable those facilities to care for the more disabled veterans, especially those suffering from Alzheimer's Disease and related dimentias. Item #2 constituted an appropriation of \$12,500 for promotion of the Veterans Trust Fund and the Veterans Commission. This appropriation enabled the Commission to publish an annual report for the first time. The annual report has been well received by veterans, veterans organizations and the legislature. Plans are to continue publication of this report on an annual basis so that the citizens of the state will be informed about the Commission's activities and expenditures from the Trust Fund. This second appropriation item also has enabled the Commission to print informational brochures and procure promotional items such as Commission buttons, ball point pens, calendars, etc. to remind citizens of the state that the Trust Fund is available for veterans programs. The appropriation further enabled the Executive Director and other members of the Commission to travel to various areas of the state for speaking engagements and other activities to promote the Trust Fund.

With the Commission's ability to get the word out about the Veterans Trust Fund and show the successes of programs for veterans, and with the restriction on appropriations of Trust Fund monies for administration of the fund, it is hoped that the fund will grow considerably more than the \$19,000 shown during FY '93.



VETERANS TRUST FUND REVENUE AND EXPENDITURE SUMMARY

FY 1993

Beginning Balance \$211,154.75

Income

| | | | |
|-------------------------|-------------|-------------|-----------|
| Tax Check-Off | \$92,110.00 | | |
| Correction to Check-Off | (6,504.50) | \$85,605.50 | |
| Direct Donations | | 1,736.00 | |
| Interest | | 7,622.68 | 94,964.18 |

Expenses

DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE

| | | | |
|-------------------------|-----------|-----------|-------------|
| Salaries | 31,008.00 | | |
| Benefits | 4,759.05 | 35,767.05 | |
| Data Processing Expense | | 596.00 | |
| Rent | | 1,982.00 | (38,345.05) |

VETERANS COMMISSION

| | | | |
|---------------------------------------|--|-----------|-------------|
| Travel | | 7,098.00 | |
| Printing, Advertising, & Publications | | 13,576.77 | |
| Phone | | 199.00 | |
| Postage | | 626.00 | |
| Supplies | | 120.00 | |
| Professional Development | | 16,255.00 | (37,874.77) |

Ending Balance \$299,899.11



OPERATING BUDGET SYNOPSIS FY 1993

| | |
|--|---------------------|
| TOTAL COMMISSION APPROPRIATION | \$14,504,167 |
| Governor's Withholdings | -331,408 |
| Available for Operations | <u>14,172,759</u> |
| <u>Program Break Out</u> | |
| Central Office & Service to Veterans Program | 1,375,225 |
| Governor's Withholding | -14,832 |
| Available for Operations | <u>1,360,393</u> |
| Veterans Homes Program | 13,128,942 |
| Governor's Withholdings | -316,576 |
| Available for Operations | <u>12,812,366</u> |



VETERANS HOMES CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS FUND

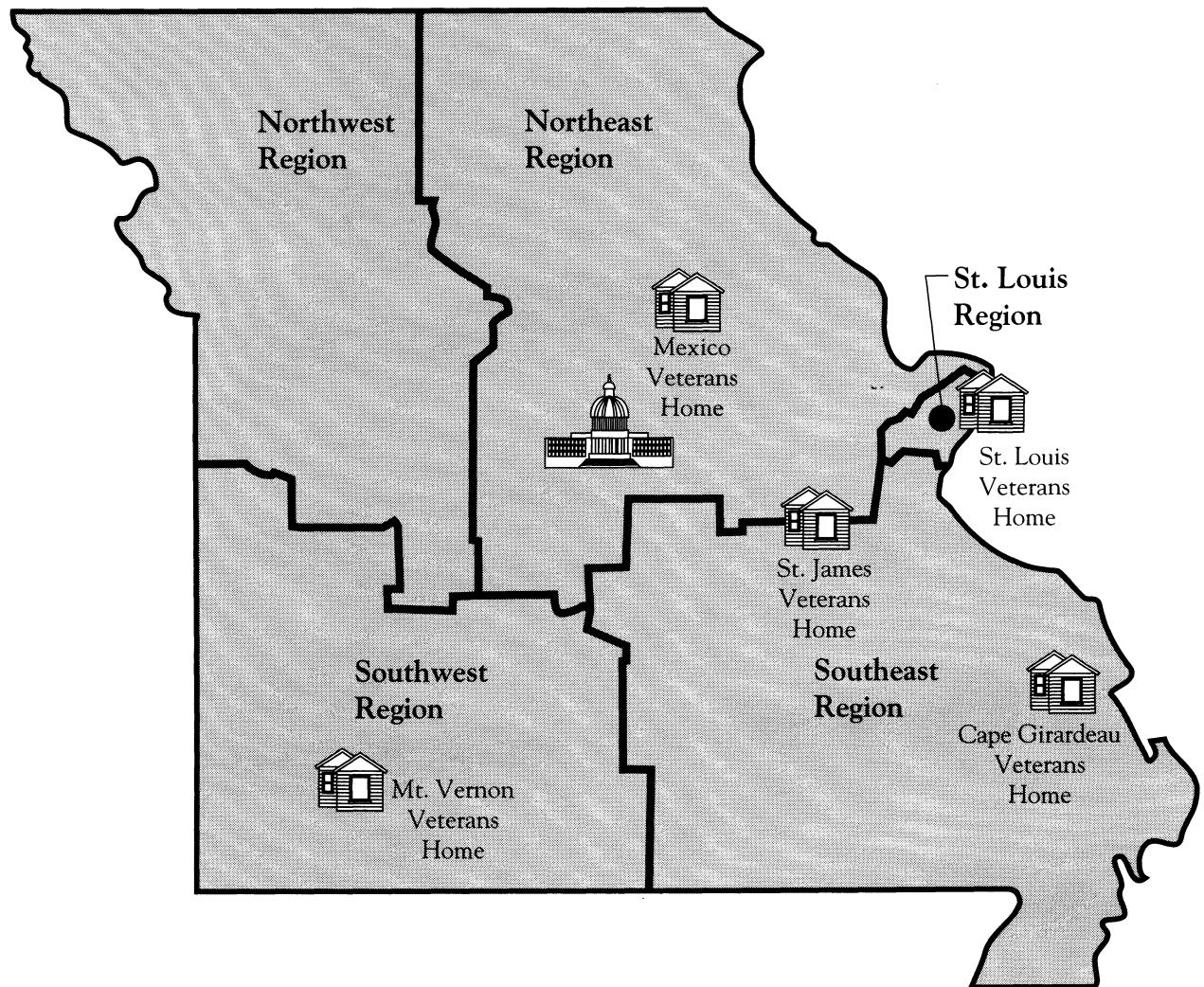
As a result of the House Sub-Committee on St. James' inquiries into deteriorating buildings, a new fund has been created for future veterans home construction. The House Sub-Committee was chaired by Representative Bob Schemenauer, with Representatives James W. Mitchell, Jim G. Pauley, Elizabeth L. Long and Norwood Creason serving as members. After clearing the idea through the Committee, Representative Bob Schemenauer introduced House Bill 112, which was successful in passing.

House Bill 112 creates a "Veterans Homes Capital Improvement Fund", to be used solely for construction or renovation of state veterans homes. Revenue for the fund will be generated through a fee of 3% on bingo and pull-tab cards. The fee, initiated on January 1, 1994, will sunset in five years. Veterans organizations actively supported HB 112, since it is expected to generate approximately \$5,000,000 per year for veterans homes construction.

COMMISSION PROFILE

In Fiscal Year 1993, the Commission employed 616 full-time employees. The Service to Veterans program was staffed by thirty-eight (38) Service Officers, Supervisors, and Assistants, plus eleven (11) clerical employees. These individuals served clients in all 114 counties of Missouri. The Missouri Veterans Homes Program was staffed by 558 employees in a wide range of job classifications. Nine (9) employees comprised the Commission's administrative headquarters in Jefferson City.

Missouri Veterans Commission



Veterans Service Regions & Veterans Home Sites

